

III. CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Currently Amended) A franking system comprising:

a memory for storing a software component for generating at least one postage indicium;

a device, operably connected to the memory, for receiving an authorization code which is derived from at least information concerning the software component; and

a processing unit, operatively connected to the memory and the device for receiving an authorization code, for verifying at least part of the authorization code to detect any unauthorized change in the software component before the at least one postage indicium is generated, the detection of any unauthorized change preventing generation of the at least one postage indicium.

2. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein the information represents a version number of the software component.
3. (Original) The system of claim 2 further comprising a counter for keeping track of the version number of the software component.
4. (Original) The system of claim 2 wherein memory locations are allocated in the memory for storing a plurality of version numbers of the software component, respectively, the version number of the software component being indicated as stored at one of the memory locations.

5. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein the information is obtained from running a predetermined algorithm on code of the software component.
6. (Original) The system of claim 5 wherein the information includes error checking information.
7. (Original) The system of claim 6 wherein the error checking information includes cyclic redundancy check (CRC) bits.
8. (Original) The system of claim 6 wherein the error checking information includes a checksum.
9. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 1 further comprising a computer where, containing the memory is in for storing a software component, wherein the authorization code is also derived from an identity of the computer.
10. (Original) The system of claim 9 wherein the identity of the computer includes a serial number thereof.
11. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 1 further comprising a postal security device (PSD) where, containing the processing unit is in for verifying at least part of the authorization code, wherein the authorization code is also derived from an identity of the PSD.
12. (Original) The system of claim 11 wherein the identity of the PSD includes a serial number thereof.
13. (Currently Amended) A franking system comprising:

a memory for storing a software component for generating at least one postage indicium;

a buffer, operably connected to the memory, for storing an authorization code which is derived from at least information concerning a configuration of the system; and

a processing unit, operatively connected to the memory and buffer, for verifying at least part of the authorization code before the at least one postage indicium is generated to detect any unauthorized change in the configuration of the franking system, the detection of any unauthorized change by the processing unit preventing generation of the at least one postage indicium by the software component.

14. (Original) The system of claim 13 further comprising software components for providing feature options in the system which are selectively enabled, wherein the configuration concerns at least a setting of the feature options.
15. (Original) The system of claim 13 wherein the configuration concerns at least a version of the software component.
16. (Original) The system of claim 13 further comprising a device for maintaining a postage fund for postage dispensation in the system, wherein the processing unit is within the device.
17. (Original) The system of claim 16 wherein the authorization code is also derived from an identity of the device.

18. (Original) The system of claim 17 wherein the identity of the device includes a serial number thereof.

19. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 13 further comprising a computer where, containing the memory is in for storing a software component, wherein the authorization code is also derived from an identity of the computer.

20. (Original) The system of claim 19 wherein the identity of the computer includes a serial number thereof.

21. (Currently Amended) A franking system for generating of postage indicia, the system having a plurality of feature options which may be enabled, the system comprising:

a device for receiving an authorization code, which is generated outside the system, in response to a request generated within the system for changing a selected setting of the feature options to a new setting different from a current setting thereof, the authorization code comprising a code segment and a data segment, the code segment being derived from at least information concerning the selected setting of the feature options, the data segment containing data concerning one or more of the feature options;

a buffer, operably connected to the device for receiving an authorization code, for effecting the change of the selected setting to the new setting of the feature options based on the data; and

a processing unit, operably connected to the buffer and the device for receiving an authorization code, for verifying the code segment to determine whether generation of postage indicia based on the selected new setting of the feature options is allowed.

22. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 21 wherein the data includes the information concerning the current setting of the feature options.
23. (Original) The system of claim 21 wherein the data is encrypted.
24. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 21 wherein the change in the selected setting of the feature options involves changing one or more of the feature options, with respect to the current setting of the feature options, the length of the data segment being a function of a quantity of the one or more of the feature options.
25. (Original) The system of claim 24 wherein the data indicates memory addresses which are associated with the one or more of the feature options, respectively, a value being stored at each memory address and the feature option associated with the memory address is changed to the value.
26. (Original) The system of claim 25 wherein the data includes offset memory addresses which are associated with the one or more of the feature options, respectively.
27. (Original) The system of claim 24 wherein the data identifies the one or more of the feature options.

28. (Currently Amended) A franking system comprising:

a first memory for storing a first software component for realizing generating at least one postage indicium, a second software component being stored in the first memory for interacting with the first software component, the second software component including a selected identifier;

a second memory, operably connected to the first memory, for storing a plurality of identifiers; and

a processing unit, operably connected to the first and second memories, for determining whether one of the plurality of identifiers corresponds to the selected identifier in the second software component when the second software component interacts with the first software component, the at least one postage indicium being realized generated only when one of the plurality of identifiers corresponds to the selected identifier.

29. (Original) The system of claim 28 further comprising a device for maintaining a postage fund for postage dispensation in the system, wherein the second memory is within the device.

30. (Original) The system of claim 28 wherein the selected identifier identifies the second software component.

31. (Original) The system of claim 28 further comprising at least one hardware component, wherein the second software component includes utility software for interfacing the first software component with the at least one hardware

component.

32. (Currently Amended) A system for reconfiguring a franking apparatus for generating postage indicia, the franking apparatus including a device for maintaining a postage fund for postage dispensation in the franking apparatus, the system comprising:

a memory for storing a value of an account for replenishing the postage fund in the franking apparatus; and

a processor, operably connected to the memory, for reconfiguring the franking apparatus, a reconfiguration of the franking apparatus incurring a cost, the cost being separate from the postage fund, the value of the account being adjusted to account for the cost, the value of the postage fund in the franking apparatus being unaffected by the reconfiguration.

33. (Original) The system of claim 32 wherein the franking apparatus is remotely reconfigured through a communication connection.

34. (Original) The system of claim 32 wherein the reconfiguration of the franking apparatus concerns at least a setting of feature options in the franking apparatus.

35. (Original) The system of claim 32 wherein the reconfiguration of the franking apparatus concerns at least a version of a software component in the franking apparatus.

36. (Original) The System of claim 32 wherein the memory also

stores information concerning a current configuration of the franking apparatus.

37. (Original) The system of claim 36 wherein the processor causes transmission of a menu to the franking apparatus for the reconfiguration thereof, the menu being generated based on the information.

38. (Currently Amended) A method for use in a franking system comprising:

storing a software component for generating at least one postage indicium;

receiving an authorization code which is derived from at least information concerning the software component; and

verifying at least part of the authorization code to detect any unauthorized change in the software component before the at least one postage indicium is generated, the detection of any unauthorized change preventing generation of the at least one postage indicium.

39. (Original) The method of claim 38 wherein the information represents a version number of the software component.

40. (Original) The method of claim 39 further comprising keeping track of the version number of the software component using a counter in the system.

41. (Original) The method of claim 39 further comprising allocating memory locations to store a plurality of version numbers of the software component, respectively, the version

number of the software component being indicated as stored at one of the memory locations.

42. (Original) The method of claim 38 wherein the information is obtained from running a predetermined algorithm on code of the software component.
43. (Original) The method of claim 42 wherein the information includes error checking information.
44. (Original) The method of claim 43 wherein the error checking information includes CRC bits.
45. (Original) The method of claim 43 wherein the error checking information includes a checksum.
46. (Original) The method of claim 38 wherein the authorization code is also derived from an identity of a computer in the system.
47. (Original) The method of claim 46 wherein the identity of the computer includes a serial number thereof.
48. (Original) The method of claim 38 wherein the authorization code is also derived from an identity of a PSD in the system.
49. (Original) The method of claim 38 wherein the identity of the PSD includes a serial number thereof.
50. (Currently Amended) A method for use in a franking system comprising:

storing a software component for generating at least one postage indicium;

storing an authorization code which is derived from at least information concerning a configuration of the system; and

verifying at least part of the authorization code before the at least one postage indicium is generated to detect any unauthorized change in the configuration of the franking system, the detection of any unauthorized change by the processing unit preventing generation of the at least one postage indicium by the software component.

51. (Original) The method of claim 50 further comprising providing feature options in the system which are selectively enabled, wherein the configuration concerns at least a setting of the feature options.
52. (Original) The method of claim 50 wherein the configuration concerns at least a version of the software component.
53. (Original) The method of claim 50 wherein the authorization code is also derived from an identity of a device for maintaining a postage fund for postage dispensation in the system.
54. (Original) The method of claim 53 wherein the identity of the device includes a serial number thereof.
55. (Original) The method of claim 50 wherein the authorization code is also derived from an identity of a computer.
56. (Original) The method of claim 55 wherein the identity of

the computer includes a serial number thereof.

57. (Currently Amended) A method for use in a franking system for generation of postage indicia, the system having a plurality of feature options which may be enabled, the method comprising:

receiving an authorization code, which is generated outside the system, in response to a request generated within the system for changing a selected setting of the feature options to a new setting different from a current setting thereof, the authorization code comprising a code segment and a data segment, the code segment being derived from at least information concerning the selected setting of the feature options, the data segment containing data concerning one or more of the feature options;

effecting the change of the selected setting to the new setting of the feature options based on the data; and

verifying the code segment to determine whether generation of postage indicia based on the selected new setting of the feature options is allowed.

58. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 57 wherein the data includes the information concerning the current setting of the feature options.

59. (Original) The method of claim 57 wherein the data is encrypted.

60. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 57 wherein the

change in the selected setting of the feature options involves changing one or more of the feature options, with respect to the current setting of the feature options, the length of the data segment being a function of a quantity of the one or more of the feature options.

61. (Original) The method of claim 60 wherein the data indicates memory addresses which are associated with the one or more of the feature options, respectively, a value being stored at each memory address and the feature option associated with the memory address is changed to the value.
62. (Original) The method of claim 61 wherein the data includes offset memory addresses which are associated with the one or more of the feature options, respectively.
63. (Original) The method of claim 57 wherein the data identifies the one or more of the feature options.
64. (Currently Amended) A method for use in a franking system comprising:

storing a first software component in a first memory for realizing generating at least one postage indicium;

storing a second software component in a first memory for interacting with the first software component, the second software component including a selected identifier;

storing a plurality of identifiers in a second memory;

determining whether one of the plurality of identifiers corresponds to the selected identifier in the second

software component when the second software component interacts with the first software component; and

realizing generating the at least one postage indicium when one of the plurality of identifiers corresponds to the selected identifier.

65. (Original) The method of claim 64 wherein the selected key identifies the second software component.

66. (Original) The method of claim 64 wherein the second software component includes utility software for interfacing the first software component with at least one hardware component in the system.

67. (Currently Amended) A method for reconfiguring a franking apparatus for generating postage indicia, the franking apparatus including a device for maintaining a postage fund for postage dispensation in the franking apparatus, the method comprising:

storing a value of an account for replenishing the postage fund in the franking apparatus;

reconfiguring the franking apparatus, a reconfiguration of the franking apparatus incurring a cost, the cost being separate from the postage fund; and

adjusting the value of the account to account for the cost, the value of the postage fund in the franking apparatus being unaffected by the reconfiguration.

68. (Original) The method of claim 67 wherein the franking

apparatus is remotely reconfigured through a communication connection.

69. (Original) The method of claim 67 wherein the reconfiguration of the franking apparatus concerns at least a setting of feature options in the franking apparatus.
70. (Original) The method of claim 67 wherein the reconfiguration of the franking apparatus concerns at least a version of a software component in the franking apparatus.
71. (Original) The method of claim 67 further comprising storing information concerning a current configuration of the franking apparatus.
72. (Original) The method of claim 71 further comprising transmitting a menu to the franking apparatus for the reconfiguration thereof, the menu being generated based on the information.